

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BELFAS 00145 031516Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-02 ICA-20 SP-02 IO-14 /068 W

-----075065 040550Z /11

R 031412Z AUG 78

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1955

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS BELFAST 145

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM,UK, EI

SUBJECT: CRITIQUE OF ARCHBISHOP'S STATEMENT ON CONDITION OF  
TERRORIST PRISONERS

REF: BELFAST 142

1. FAVORABLE AND CRITICAL COMMENTS ON CATHOLIC PRIMATE  
ARCHBISHOP O FIAICH'S STATEMENT (REFTEL) ON THE CONDITION  
OF PRISONERS CONVICTED OF TERRORIST OFFENSES CONTINUES. SOME  
ON BOTH SIDES ARE QUITE STRONG. THE MOST TELLING, HOWEVER,  
IS THE AUGUST 2 EDITORIAL IN BELFAST'S AFTERNOON DAILY, THE  
"TELEGRAPH". THIS PAPER IS SYMPATHETIC TO THE UNIONIST  
VIEWPOINT BUT IS NONSECTARIAN AND GENERALLY PRESENTS TO  
THE BELFAST PUBLIC THE MOST BALANCED VIEW.

2. UNDER THE TITLE "HUMAN ERROR", THE TELEGRAPH STATES:  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMATE, DR. O'FIAICH, IS AN EMOTIONAL  
MAN WITH DEEP HUMANITARIAN CONVICTIONS, WHO DOES NOT FEAR TO SPEAK  
HIS MIND. HE HAS BEEN IN TROUBLE BEFORE, FOR LETTING HIS HEART  
RULE HIS HEAD, AND UNFORTUNATELY HAS DONE IT AGAIN, WITH A  
STATEMENT ABOUT THE MAZE WHICH CAN BEST BE DESCRIBED AS NAIVE.

NO ONE DOUBTS THAT CONDITIONS ARE APPALLING, BOTH FOR THE  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BELFAS 00145 031516Z

PRISONERS AND THE STAFF. ONLY A SADIST WOULD WISH THEM TO  
CONTINUE FOR A DAY LONGER THAN NECESSARY. BUT WHY ARE THE  
PRISONERS SQUATTING ON WET MATTRESSES, WITH EXCRETA AND ROTTEN  
FOOD SMEARED ON THE WALLS? BECAUSE THEY CHOOSE TO, AS A MEANS  
OF RESTORING POLITICAL STATUS.

THEY WOULD HAVE BEDS TO LIE IN, AND TABLES, AND CHAIRS, IF  
THEY HAD NOT DESTROYED THEM. UNLIKE THE SEWER-PIPE DWELLERS OF

CALCUTTA -- AN UNHAPPY COMPARISON, THIS - THEY DO HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE.

THE ARCHBISHOP ACCEPTS THAT THE MEN ARE MAKING A POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION, BUT INSTEAD OF URGING THEM TO STOP, TO SAVE THEM FROM THEMSELVES, HE ARGUES THAT IT IS FOR THE PRISON AUTHORITIES TO BEND. HE STOPS SHORT OF CALLING FOR POLITICAL STATUS, BUT WOULD BE WILLING TO PUT THE PROTESTING PRISONERS IN A SPECIAL CATEGORY BECAUSE, AS HE SAYS, THEY ARE DIFFERENT.

WHAT IS NAIVE ABOUT HIS PROPOSAL IS THAT HE SEEMS TO IMAGINE THAT THERE WOULD BE A RESPONSE FROM THE PRISONERS TO OFFERS OF WRITING MATERIALS, TV, RADIO OR PHYSICAL RECREATION.

ALSO HE IS TOO QUICK TO ACCEPT THE ARGUMENT AGAINST NON-JURY COURTS -- THEY WERE INTRODUCED BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION OF JURORS - AND THAT CONFESSIONS HAVE BEEN PARTLY INVALIDATED BY THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT. THIS IS TO UNDERMINE RESPECT OF THE LAW, BEFORE A FULL INVESTIGATION.

HE IS CAUGHT IN A TRAP, AS ANY HUMANITARIAN MUST BE, BY THE OUTRAGEOUSNESS OF THE IRA'S TACTICS. BUT THE ANSWER IS NOT TO CONCEDE THE PRISONERS' CASE, NOR TO ACCEPT THE HISTORICAL INEVITABILITY OF THEIR PROTEST, BUT TO PERSUADE THEM TO PURSUE THEIR REPUBLICANISM BY OTHER MEANS, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE PRISON. STOUT

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HUMAN RIGHTS, PRISONERS, TERRORISTS, SPEECHES, RELIGIOUS LEADERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 aug 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978BELFAS00145  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780320-0645  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** BELFAST  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780899/aaaadfmz.tel  
**Line Count:** 84  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 1e06366a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 BELFAST 142  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 29 mar 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1841137  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CRITIQUE OF ARCHBISHOP'S STATEMENT ON CONDITION OF TERRORIST PRISONERS  
**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, SHUM, UK, EI  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/1e06366a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014